

Clement E. Dasch, 1925–2007

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Dr. Clement E. Dasch, 82, of New Concord, Ohio, died Nov. 29, 2007. He was a leading authority of Nearctic Ichneumonidae for over 40 years. Dr. Dasch was born Nov. 28, 1925 in Steubenville, OH and was a veteran of World War II, having served as a mortarman with the U.S. Army in France and Germany. He was a recipient of the Purple Heart.

He obtained his bachelor and doctorate degrees from Cornell and was a professor of biology at Muskingum College, New Concord for 37 years, retiring in 1990. He was a long-time member of the Entomological Society of America and the International Society of Hymenopterists, as well as a Director of the American Entomological Institute. He is survived by his wife Betty, four sons, nine grandchildren and his brother Lawrence.

In terms of contributions to Hymenoptera, Clement Dasch published 10 works on Ichneumonidae from 1958 to 1992. Seven of these were revisionary memoirs of more than 300 pages each. A summary of his major studies is presented in Table 1.

Dr. Dasch's work greatly complemented Henry Townes's higher level studies, and the meticulous and comprehensive nature of his Nearctic revisions contribute to making the Nearctic probably the best known region of the world for Ichneumonidae. What is most notable in Table 1 is the proportion of new species that he described, clearly illustrating the dearth of alpha-level knowledge of the family prior to his work. Perhaps most remarkable was his 1988 revision of the 313 Nearctic species of *Glypta*, of which 269 were new. As this genus is one of the most important for biological control of lepidopterous forest pests, Dr. Dasch thus leaves a legacy not only in taxonomy, but in applied entomology as well. It must be mentioned that this work would not have been possible without the partnership of his wife Betty, who worked tirelessly with him to produce these studies.

In addition to the revisionary work, Clement and Betty Dasch were exceptional collectors, amassing over 300,000 parasitic Hymenoptera from 1948–1998. The bulk of the collection (including 236,000 Ichneu-

Table 1. Statistics of Clement Dasch's major ichneumonid studies.

Ichneumonid taxon revised by region	Year	specimens examined	species treated	species described	% new species
Neotropical Diplazontinae	1964	n/a	52	42	81%
Nearctic Diplazontinae	1964	16762	101	58	57%
Nearctic Mesochorinae	1971	10057	127	95	75%
Neotropical Mesochorinae	1974	2416	277	263	95%
Nearctic Anomaloniinae	1979	25304	179	111	62%
Nearctic Cremastinae	1984	16002	322	257	80%
Nearctic Glyptini	1988	21671	317	271	86%
Nearctic Orthocentrinae s.l.	1992	29500	120	88	73%
Total		121712	1495	1185	



Fig. 1. Clement Dasch visiting the Provancher Collection, Université Laval, Québec in 1981.

monidae) was given to the American Entomological Institute in Gainesville, Florida and is housed in the Clement and Betty Dasch room at the facility. One of the amazing aspects of Dasch's research was

that he was not a full-time research taxonomist, but a professional teacher. His outstanding contribution towards ichneumonid taxonomy was undertaken as an extra; a passion that consumed most of his

and his wife's time. They collected prodigiously, then mounted and labelled and sorted far more specimens than most museum collections processed. Amongst the sciences, taxonomy is perhaps unique in depending on the efforts of a few individuals who have a level of dedication that is truly phenomenal. Notable examples are C.P. Alexander in Tipulidae, Walter Rothschild and Karl Jordan in Sphingidae, and of course Henry and Marjorie Townes in Ichneumonidae. Dasch is on a level with these all-time greats: an individual who has made many subfamilies of ichneumonids accessible to North American biologists during an era when taxonomy was a Cinderella subject and funding for systematics was in global decline. If we are ever going to really know the fauna of planet Earth, society needs to be able to cultivate more individuals like Clement Dasch. His death leaves a gap that is unlikely to be filled in the foreseeable future.

CLEMENT E. DASCH PUBLICATIONS

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